Homeland Security

Call for Concept Papers
Local Implementation of WISCOM

**Concept Papers must be submitted electronically
on or before October 1, 2010**

Important Contact Information for this Opportunity:

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Summary

Program Area: Homeland Security

Title: Local Implementation of WISCOM

Description: Approximately $3.2 million is available for local implementations of the Wisconsin Interoperable System for Communications (WISCOM). This Call for Concept Papers is intended to identify agencies or groups of agencies that are interested in replacing existing communications systems with a WISCOM system for daily operations. Local and county agencies and tribal governments are encouraged to participate in this process for the purpose of receiving technical assistance from the State's engineering consultant in developing local WISCOM integration plans and assessing implementation costs. Agencies that complete this process may qualify for additional grant funding for interoperable equipment purchases.

Opportunity Category: Competitive

Important Dates:

Concept Paper Due Date: Concept papers will be accepted through October 1, 2010. Concept papers will be reviewed as they are submitted on a first come, first served basis, and decisions will be made to move forward with qualified applicants as soon as possible. Applicants are encouraged to submit papers as soon as possible to avoid disappointment should available funds be obligated prior to the final due date.

Technical Assistance Consultations/Decisions: Within 30 days of submission of concept paper

Local Engineering Studies/Cost Analysis Completed: 30-90 days after initiating the study

Interoperable Equipment Grants Offered: approximately 30 days after completion of the study

Anticipated Funding Amount: Up to $3.2 million will be awarded. We anticipate awarding up to 8 grants.

Match/Cost Sharing Requirement: No match is required for technical assistance services from the State's engineering consultant. These costs will be directly covered under an existing state contract through OJA. Agencies that complete the engineering study and are determined to be eligible for additional implementation funding (including equipment grants) will be required to provide a local match as required by federal guidelines.

Eligibility: Local or county units of government or tribal governments located in the state of Wisconsin.

Local Implementation of WISCOM - Call for Concept Papers

The Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance (OJA) provides financial and technical assistance to public safety, first response and emergency management agencies throughout the state. As the State Administering Agency for state and federal criminal justice and homeland security grant funds, OJA is responsible for establishing funding priorities, developing application criteria, awarding and disseminating grants, and assessing project achievements. This grant announcement provides information about a specific grant opportunity and instructions to help those eligible apply for a share of the available funds.

Program Description
The Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance (OJA) is making approximately $3.2 million available for local implementations of the Wisconsin Interoperable System for Communications (WISCOM) - a shared statewide system that first responders will use to communicate during a major disaster or large-scale incident. WISCOM will support up to four simultaneous conversation paths during an incident and dramatically increase the capacity available with current statewide mutual aid channels. WISCOM will allow responders from any area of the state to assist another community without any loss of communication capability.

This Call for Concept Papers is intended to identify agencies or groups of agencies that are interested in replacing existing communications systems with a WISCOM system for daily operations. Local and county agencies and tribal governments are encouraged to participate in this process for the purpose of receiving technical assistance in developing local WISCOM integration plans and assessing system implementation costs.

Agencies that complete this process may qualify for additional grant funding for interoperable equipment purchases.

This process involves four steps:

1. Applicant agency submits Concept Paper for review

2. Eligible agencies are invited to participate in an in-person consultation with OJA staff, representatives from the Statewide System Management Group, and the State's engineering consultant.

3. Selected agencies will be provided technical assistance to develop local WISCOM integration plans and assess system implementation costs. Assistance will be provided directly under an existing state contract. (No separate grant application will be required)

4. Agencies selected to implement WISCOM for daily operations (based on findings of technical assistance and other criteria) will be invited to apply for interoperability equipment grants.

Concept papers will be accepted through October 1, 2010. Reviews and technical assistance decisions will begin prior to this date. ~~(can we say "w~~with initial decisions being made no earlier than July 15, 2010. ~~) awards being based on level of interest by local agencies.~~ Applicants are

encouraged to submit papers as soon as possible to avoid disappointment should available funds be expended prior to the final due date.

Step 1: Submit Concept Paper
Concept papers must be submitted as an email attachment to OJAHomelandSecurity@wisconsin.gov by October 1, 2010 at the latest. Allowable formats include Adobe PDF or MS WORD. (Please confirm that your email with attached concept paper has been received by OJA. Call Ms. Sabrina Fordyce at (608) 266-2450 or email her at Sabrina.Fordyce@wi.gov.)

The concept paper must include the following:

1. *WISCOM Implementation Statement of Interest:* Briefly:

    - Discuss why you are interested in using WISCOM for daily communication operations.

    - Discuss any current plans for upgrade or replacement of your current system and describe any funds that would be available during the next 24 month period as a match for any federal funding awarded for this project.

    - Describe how implementation of WISCOM fits with your strategic public safety communications plan.

2. *Description of Local System:* Provide a brief description of your existing public safety radio system. Include the following:
    - Age of current communications system. Include installation year and description of oldest and newest components.
    - Type of current communications system: Analog or Digital
    - Is the communications system conventional or trunked?
    - Type of coverage provided: Mobile and/or Portable (Please include coverage maps if available.)
    - Is the system capable of providing coverage within buildings? If so, what types of structures and are you currently experiencing any coverage issues?
    - Is the communications system meeting current coverage requirements?
    - Is the current system compliant with TIA-102 (Project 25) standards?
    - Will current communications system meet the FCC's January 1, 2013 narrowbanding mandate?
    - Number of users and number of subscriber mobile and portable radios by discipline
    - Number of communities involved in this proposal

3. *Local WISCOM Integration Workgroup:* Each applicant must establish a workgroup to represent the various public safety/emergency response disciplines that will be impacted by the local implementation of WISCOM. At a minimum, workgroups must include at least one local elected official and at least one representative from each of the following disciplines: PSAP, law enforcement and fire services or EMS. For each workgroup member, provide a name, agency representing, title and contact information.

4. *Letter(s) of Support:* Include at least one letter of support from a local elected official who is not also a member of the integration workgroup. Resolutions of support passed by local public officials are acceptable, but not required.

5. *Point of Contact:* Provide contact information for the individual responsible for leading your WISCOM implementation process. Include name, phone number, email address, agency and title.

6. *Signature Page:* Provide a statement of support for the local implementation of WISCOM for day-to-day communications. This statement must be signed by (at a minimum) the Point of Contact and each member of the integration workgroup.

7. *Applicant Questions:* Include any questions you may have regarding WISCOM, this opportunity, or the technical assistance being offered.

Concept papers will be reviewed by a team comprised of OJA staff, representatives from the Statewide System Management Group, and the State's engineering consultant. Initial decisions on eligibility will be based on an assessment of the applicant's readiness to implement the project as described in the concept paper. Additional priority will be given to concept papers with the following attributes (in this order):

1. Proposals to replace existing communications systems currently in use by multiple agencies with a WISCOM system ~~buildout~~build out.

2. Proposals that seek to consolidate multiple existing communications systems into a single WISCOM system ~~buildout~~build out.

3. Proposals that seek to replace existing communications systems currently in use by an individual agency with a WISCOM system buildout.

Please note: Within each of the 3 priority levels, additional weight will be given to applicants with a potential radio fleet of 50 or more WISCOM subscriber radios followed by those with fewer subscriber radios. Note that this grant is not for developing gateways between existing systems and WISCOM. All proposals must include the implementation of WISCOM for day-to-day communication operations.

Step 2: Applicant/OJA Consultation
Selected applicants will be invited to Madison to discuss local needs and interest in WISCOM implementation. Agencies will provide a brief presentation on their local communications capabilities and strategic direction for public safety communications in their area. The review panel will also be interested in learning more about the following issues regarding the local system:

1. Agency level of confidence in existing system reliability including "mean time between failure" and "mean time between outage" rates.

2. Frequency of occurrence of "out of service for maintenance and repair" for individual infrastructure components.

3. Significant factors that have changed in the way the agency operates since the day the communication system was installed.

4. Agency practices regarding lifecycle replacement plans/budgeting for system components.

5. Expansion capabilities of the current system, specifically regarding adding frequencies.

6. Frequency range of current system.

7. Readiness for interoperability with any other systems, including necessary system modifications.

8. Flexibility of dispatch center communication consoles for programming with additional resources.

9. Potential for current system upgrade to comply with Project 25—Phase II.

10. Potential for current system to stay in its current band or alternatively, to 'relocate' to another band.

Step 3: Technical Assistance
Based on this consultation and the recommendations of the State engineering consultant, the review team will select up to 8 proposals for further development and technical assistance. If more projects are recommended than the funding available allows, funds will be distributed to include a variety of scenarios and challenges to implementation. We believe this will better inform future implementation efforts involving the mix of systems currently in operation throughout the state. Proposals not selected for will be filed for future OJA grant funding opportunities.

Agencies selected for technical assistance will receive the services of the State engineering consultant in developing local WISCOM integration plans and assessing system implementation costs/benefits for using WISCOM as the local solution for daily communications operations.

Given the variety of solutions currently being employed locally, and the general complexity of public safety communications systems, the engineering studies will likely result in a unique approach with differing costs/benefits for each agency. Upon completion of these studies, the review team will work with in partnership with participating agencies to assess the recommended solution, the availability of local funds to the "match" federal grants, and the steps to implement the project.

Step 4: WISCOM Interoperability Equipment Grants
Agencies that complete the engineering study and can provide the necessary funds for a local "match" will be invited to apply for WISCOM Interoperability Equipment Grants to assist with the local implementation effort. A total of up to $3.2 million will be available.

Additional Resources
Additional information about the Wisconsin Interoperability Initiative and is available on our website: http://interop.wi.gov.

If you have questions about this opportunity, please contact:

Statewide Interoperability Manager, David Spenner at (608) 513-2845 or email him at david.spenner@wisconsin.gov, or

- Statewide Communications Interoperability Planning Analyst, Jennifer Lord at (608) 264-7883 or email her at jennifer.lord@wisconsin.gov.